

# Seattle Human Rights Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 3, 2013, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

City Hall - Boards and Commissions Room

### **Commissioners Present:**

Nika Dahlbacka, Alejandra Gonza, Marsha Mavunkel, Michael Mitchell, Catherine Moore, Greg Ramirez, Christopher Stearns, Christina Ygon, Jennifer Yogi

### **Commissioners Absent:**

Jessica Andrade, Katherine Beckett, Isabel Bussarakum, David Lujano, Andrea Negrete, Marty Penner

### **SOCR Staff Present:**

Michael Chin, Felicia Yearwood

### **Guests:**

Peter Kuel

### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

December 2012 minutes were approved as read

### **Public Comment:**

Peter Kuel:

Human rights tragedies are occurring in South Sudan. Residents and journalists are being killed, homes destroyed, and families displaced. Mr. Kuel seeks assistance from the Commission in four ways:

1. Write a letter to the U.S. government and to Human Rights Watch urging them to put pressure on the government of South Sudan.
2. Help the South Sudanese Human Rights Organization in Seattle with organizing.
3. Help train South Sudanese in Seattle to be effective human rights advocates.
4. Participate in a conference call to address these abuses.

Alejandra Gonza will follow up with UW and determine whether they will hold a forum on the issues in South Sudan.

### **SOCR report:**

Mike Chin

- Three hundred people attended the Governing for Racial Equity conference
- SOCR is planning two law changes:
  - Add religious accommodation to employment ordinance
  - Add age as a protected class
- Familial status in employment has arisen as an issue in the past

## Temporary Protected Status

**MOTION:** To ratify the resolution on Temporary Protected Status for Guatemalans.  
**ACTION: PASSED**

## Assault Weapons Ban

A bill that would ban certain assault weapons will likely be introduced in Olympia. The City might change its social investment policy to divest from companies that produce weapons or ammunition. Before taking action, the Commission must determine whether the initiative process has been started. Marsha Mavunkel will follow up with CM Harrell's office.

## Native American Mascots

KING5-TV contacted Christopher Stearns asking for a statement regarding a purported wager between Mayor McGinn and the Mayor of Washington DC, wherein McGinn vowed to fly the Redskins flag over City Hall if the Seahawks lose an upcoming game. The Commission is strongly opposed to promoting the Redskins image, which many Native Americans find offensive.

**MOTION:** to authorize Christopher Stearns to express opposition to flying the Redskins flag to the Mayor and to the news media. **ACTION: PASSED**

**NOTE WELL:** Subsequent to the meeting, it was discovered that the wager involved flying the flag of Washington DC, not the Redskins flag, so no action was taken.

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

- Target date in September
- Will seek sponsorships to cover costs
- Michael Mitchell and Alejandra Gonza will edit the SHRC history report

## Coal Transport

Chris Stearns is editing the Commission's testimony. The Environmental Impact Study is expected to take three years.

## Police Accountability

The Commission recommends data collection on race, and transparency in the use of technological advances. Chris Stearns will schedule an opportunity to share background information with newer commissioners.

## **Projects for UW Students**

Katherine Beckett will meet with the students on January 11, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. on campus.

## **Annual Report**

Felicia Yearwood to resend draft outline created by Andrea Negrete.

## **Secure Communities**

Chris Stearns will follow up with the King County Civil Rights Commission and the Seattle Women's Commission.

## **Appeals**

Catherine Moore volunteered to serve on the February appeal panel.

## **Violence Against Women Act**

Senator Patty Murray is expected to reintroduce the VAWA in 2013.

## **Announcements:**

Five Commission Meeting: 2/13/13, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Next SHRC meeting: 2/7/13, 6:00-8:00 p.m.